

securing the border. Imagine that: a Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security who does not believe in a secure border. You cannot make this stuff up. You can't make it up.

For weeks now, a bipartisan group of Senators has pressed the Department of Homeland Security for their plan to secure the border, to secure this country. And for weeks, they have ignored our concerns.

As of today, Chairman DURBIN has no plan to summon Secretary Mayorkas for a hearing so we can ask him directly.

Last week, however, things escalated during a hearing at the House Appropriations Committee when the Secretary confirmed that the administration is considering pulling staff and resources out of the VA-run facilities and sending them to the border.

This is crazy. It is not part of the Department of Veterans Affairs' "Fourth Mission" to help the Biden administration save face. But even if it was, the VA is already struggling to serve veterans.

We are on the Veterans' Affairs Committee. Our case backlog for benefits, for healthcare, is over 260,000 cases. And you are going to take resources and medical personnel and administrative personnel and do what with them? Send them to the border.

Getting basic care through the VA has become almost impossible. You hear it. I hear it. We all hear it from our veterans. And they know that these facilities are understaffed. This is why they are wanting to go to community care. And the Agency is experiencing a 15-year high in turnover for nurses.

And what does this administration do? They say: We are going to take the people left working in VA healthcare and administration, we are going to shift them down to the border because the Border Patrol needs some help. Meanwhile, the people who have put on the uniform and have fought for this Nation can't get healthcare. And this administration acts like they don't give a ripping flip about any of it: the veterans, our Nation's sovereignty, securing the border, protecting our citizens, eliminating the impact of drugs that are flooding our streets. To make our veterans suffer, that is unconscionable.

The administration knows that border encounters have consistently increased since the day they took power—they know this; they have watched it—and it appears that they have intentionally and purposefully allowed it.

They know that as long as the border is open, that people from all around the globe are going to come. As I said, 160 different countries last year; of that, 42 known terrorist watch list individuals—42 of them.

But rather than keeping title 42 in place or embracing "Remain in Mexico" or building a wall or giving the Border Patrol the resources they have

asked for years to defend this border, this administration has decided the way to go about this is to let the veterans suffer. If they have waited 3 months, 6 months, a year, they can wait a little longer. That is their thought: Take the resources out of VA and send it to the border.

There is nothing compassionate about this narrative. There is nothing caring. There is nothing right about this narrative.

You know, it is the reason that—as the President said, he knows his approval rating is low. He knows there is a reason for it. He is not doing anything about it. He is choosing not to do anything about it. He is choosing not to shift his priorities.

I will tell you, I have spent a lot of my adult life in the greatest creative community on the face of the Earth. We are surrounded by some writers and storytellers. And I would say that for some of the great authors and storytellers in the neighborhood, they couldn't mash together a plotline as convoluted as this one, because people would say that would never happen in the United States. You would never see us purposefully running up inflation or running up the cost of energy or opening our southern border and allowing terrorists and drug dealers and sex traffickers and human traffickers and gangs to run in.

You would never knowingly allow cartels to set up shop on U.S. soil. You wouldn't do that. But this administration has, and they did it because they know pain is the point. Suffering is the point. We are going to do this to you.

It goes back to what I said many weeks ago. We, as conservatives, have a vision for better days, for hope, for opportunity for all, for preserving the freedom of this great Nation, for preserving our rights, for protecting faith and freedom and families and hope and opportunity. And I fear that my Democratic colleagues, they have got an agenda. The agenda is what we are going to do to you in order to push a Marxist socialist agenda.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JOHNSON. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 546, Joshua Frost, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

Charles E. Schumer, Brian Schatz, Alex Padilla, Benjamin L. Cardin, Jack Reed, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Tammy Duckworth, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Chris Van Hollen, Catherine Cortez Masto, Gary C. Peters, Elizabeth Warren, Jacky Rosen, Ben Ray Lujan, Cory A. Booker, Christopher A. Coons.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Joshua Frost, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant executive clerk called the roll.

(Mr. HEINRICH assumed the Chair.)

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) is necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN), the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY), the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO) and the Senator from Alabama (Mr. TUBERVILLE).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Missouri (Mr. HAWLEY), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. TOOMEY), would have voted "nay", and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) would have voted "nay."

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 54, nays 36, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 143 Ex.]

YEAS—54

Baldwin	Heinrich	Peters
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Rosen
Brown	Kaine	Rounds
Cantwell	Kelly	Sanders
Capito	King	Schatz
Cardin	Klobuchar	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Shaheen
Casey	Lujan	Sinema
Collins	Manchin	Smith
Coons	Markey	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Tester
Duckworth	Merkley	Van Hollen
Durbin	Murkowski	Warner
Feinstein	Murphy	Warnock
Gillibrand	Murray	Warren
Hagerty	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden

NAYS—36

Barrasso	Fischer	Portman
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Boozman	Hyde-Smith	Romney
Braun	Inhofe	Sasse
Burr	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Lankford	Scott (SC)
Cornyn	Lee	Shelby
Cotton	Lummis	Sullivan
Crapo	Marshall	Thune
Cruz	McConnell	Tillis
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young

NOT VOTING—10

Bennet	Hawley	Toomey
Blunt	Hoeben	Tuberville
Cramer	Kennedy	
Graham	Rubio	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KING). On this vote, the yeas are 54, the nays are 36.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Ohio.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, for generations, manufacturing was the lifeblood of communities across Ohio and throughout the country. It was heavily unionized. The jobs paid well. It is not a coincidence that those two things go together. We know carrying a union card means better wages, better hope in retirement benefits, and more control over the workers' schedule.

These jobs allowed generations of Americans to build a middle-class life. But beginning in the seventies and eighties, we stopped making things in this country. Look at places like my hometown of Mansfield, OH. I went to Johnny Appleseed Junior High School, Mansfield Senior High School. I walked the halls with sons and daughters of autoworkers from GM and machinists of Ohio Brass and electrical workers from Westinghouse and rubber workers from Mansfield Tire and hundreds and hundreds of the sons and daughters of people in the building trades—laborers and pipe fitters and carpenters and millwrights and painters and one trade after another. Companies like Westinghouse and Tappan Stove all closed down one after another. Go to any town in Ohio and throughout the industrial Midwest and people can name a similar list.

We know what happened: Corporations in Ohio shut down production in Mansfield, my hometown, or Lorain, where I was today, or Youngstown or Cincinnati or Toledo, in search of cheaper labor, in search of right-to-work States, and in search of weaker workers' compensation or unemployment benefit laws. They moved to Alabama. They moved to Tennessee. They moved to Arkansas.

And then, that wasn't quite good enough. Then those same corporations lobbied Congress for trade agreements and tax treatments. So they then moved on to Mexico, and that labor wasn't quite cheap enough, and they moved on to China.

Ohio has paid the price for years in the form of lost jobs and lost opportunities. Now—and I know what the Presiding Officer has seen in the State of Maine. You understand this. The whole country pays the price—higher prices, supply chain delays, losing entire high-tech industries to competitors like China.

Look where we've ended up. In Ohio, Thomas Edison invented the light bulb. Today, 99 percent of LED bulbs are made in China.

America invented the semiconductor. Forty years ago, the U.S. produced half of the world's semiconductors. Today it is 10 percent—about 75 percent made in East Asia. Look what happened. During the pandemic, companies across Ohio and the rest of the country shut down production lines not because

there wasn't demand, they shut down production lines and laid off workers because they couldn't get enough semiconductors.

Whether you are Ford in Lima, Whirlpool in Clyde, Kenworth in Chillicothe, OH, or Navistar in Springfield, you need these chips.

It is why the Senate must fund the bipartisan CHIPS Act. We agreed to authorize this program. Now it is time to move and to fund it.

At the end of January, Senator PORTMAN and I flew to Columbus to join Intel to announce the largest ever domestic investment in semiconductor manufacturing. It will create 10,000 good-paying jobs. Union tradespeople—5,000 union tradespeople—for 10 years will build this facility. Think of the magnitude of that. As we were flying in on the plane, I remember sitting with the Secretary of Commerce and Senator PORTMAN and my friend Don Graves, from Cleveland—the No. 2 guy at Commerce.

I looked out, and I said:

Today, in Ohio, we are finally burying the term "Rust Belt."

It is possible because we are on the verge of passing this historic investment. The EU, China, Taiwan, and South Korea are all for providing incentives to make these chips domestically. None of them—none of them—require stock warrants as this motion would have us do. That is why I oppose this motion. Other countries are mimicking what we are doing. The EU, if Congress doesn't move quickly on the CHIPS Act, is already trying to attract that business there.

In the history of the United States, the only time we have ever required equity warrants from private companies is during times of war or in moments of financial and global crisis. It is not a bailout; it is an incentive. This motion to instruct conferees is well-intentioned, but it won't work. It will make the U.S. program less competitive. It is likely to cause these companies to make these chips overseas where they can get the same incentives without those strings.

I understand Senator SANDERS' goal. It is a goal I share. I just spoke with the Presiding Officer, and neither of us has a particularly favorable attitude toward what we have seen with stock buybacks and the damage that they have done to our economy and what it has meant in the undermining of companies' investments in their workers and in new product lines. I have had—I don't know—6, 8, 10, 12 calls with the Chair of the Federal Reserve, Jay Powell, asking him—pleading with him—about restricting some of the stock buybacks at some of the largest American banks, especially during the pandemic.

As I said, I understand Senator SANDERS' goal. We have got to make sure that the jobs that are created are good-paying ones where workers can build careers. That is why, in the CHIPS Act, we require the chips funding go to the

construction or to the modernization of U.S. facilities to support American jobs, require chip applicants to make commitments to workers and community investments, and require chips projects be sustainable without additional Federal funding. These are initial Federal investments that generate long-term, well-paying jobs.

In both the Senate and House competition bills, we also require chips recipients to pay the prevailing wage to employees or contractors. That is why the United Auto Workers supports this position. They support chip funding. It is why the building trades support chips funding and oppose this SANDERS' motion.

I can tell you, from experience, if we drive these semiconductor jobs away, the alternative is not a replacement with other similarly high-quality jobs. Ohio has had that promise too often. Drive around Ohio, and you will see the alternative to low-wage, anti-union, big-box stores where workers have little control over their schedules and little power to build a better life.

It is also important to remember that this investment isn't just for semiconductors. It will affect smaller supply companies and their supply chains. It will affect all of the downstream industries that rely on these chips for all kinds of productions: appliances, auto, energy deployment. Our clean energy, independent future is going to rely on American-made semiconductor chips.

Mr. President, I want to talk on one other motion that will be made in the next 48 hours, on this floor, to the CHIPS Act.

We need to make more in this country. We shouldn't be taking other actions that discourage domestic production.

I urge my colleagues to oppose a motion to instruct that supports a broad exclusion process for 301 tariffs for goods from China. Those tariffs are in place because of China's unfair trade practices targeting our industrial base and Ohio jobs. The AFL-CIO opposes it. The U.S. Trade Rep's office opposes it, and she was confirmed here in a unanimous vote. The Alliance for American Manufacturing opposes it. They know that any removal of these tariffs needs to be part of a broader, strategic approach to trade policy with China.

We can't let China undermine the investments that American manufacturers make in workers and communities here in the United States. If we do this bill right, it will mean we will finally make more in America. We will begin bringing back the supply chains to our country. It will help us bury the term "Rust Belt" once and for all.

When you love this country, you fight for the people who make it work. That is what the CHIPS Act is about. It is about workers. It is about good-paying jobs. It is about increasing the unionization of workers in this country. It will lift all boats.

I yield the floor.